



For over 20 years, CREP has been a successful partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and the Illinois Soil and Water Districts (SWCD). The program goals are to reduce sediment & nutrient runoff, improve water quality, and create and enhance critical habitat for fish and wildlife populations on private lands within the Illinois and Kaskaskia River Watersheds. Currently, there are more than 1,300 CREP easements protecting over 90,000 acres.

## What's New with CREP?

We are open for new enrollment! Interested landowners should contact their local their county Farm Service Agency (FSA), Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) or Conservation Resource Specialist for more information.

Since June, IDNR and the SWCDs have received nine new CREP easement applications from Christian, Macoupin, Montgomery, Macon, and Sangamon Counties.

## SWCD Shout-Out!

As the season of harvesting and giving thanks approaches, the CREP staff at IDNR would like to express our gratitude to the SWCDs for your effort to bring CREP back to Illinois landowners. Your hard work in the field and in the office has improved the quality and the efficiency of the CREP program for years to come. Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season!

## Photo of the Season



Photo Credit: Landowner Steve White

## Landowner Spotlight



After winning the Illinois Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year award, Steve and Dianne White hosted a tree day event on their property located in Fulton Co. Over 50 people attended this event and had the opportunity to explore the wetlands, prairie habitat, and wooded acres that have been established over the last decade.

Steve enrolled the highly erodible floodplain acres of his property in the CREP program back in 2008.

**“The CREP acres are a linchpin for good deer, quail, and woodcock habitat.”**  
— Steve White



## Critter Corner – All About Bats!

Bats are amazingly diverse! There are 1,400 species worldwide and 13 here in Illinois. They are a vital pest-control resource, saving humans a billion dollars a year. A single colony of big brown bats can eat a whole pound of insects in a single night!

Photo credit: Illinois Bat Conservation Program



Photo credit: Illinois Bat Conservation Program

CREP Easements can make excellent bat habitat. Bats love large, shaggy-barked trees that get plenty of sun. Native, night-blooming forbs like milkweed, phlox, and evening primrose are also a great resource. Consider helping even more by having a bat house on your property! Visit [batcon.org](http://batcon.org) or [illinoisbats.com](http://illinoisbats.com) for more information!



## The More You Know...

### Leave those snags!

Collect winter firewood from the forest floor but leave those snags! Snag trees are any dead or dying tree, standing at least six feet in height.

Upland birds, small mammals, and insects all use snag trees for protection, nesting, feeding, storage and roosting.

As a general rule, maintain at least 5 snag trees per acre of woodland, ranging between 6 and 20 inches in diameter at breast height (DBH).

Learn more about CREP's partners in Conservation.  
[CREP Partnerships](#)

## Conservation Resource Specialists

Did you know CREP has 6 field specialists to support the program? They would be happy to visit with you on your property to address any CREP related question.

[Look up the staff for your area](#)

Don't forget, you can find a ton of info and answers to frequently asked questions on [the CREP website](#).

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/CREP>

If you would like to be added to our email list or have other questions contact

[DNR.CREP@illinois.gov](mailto:DNR.CREP@illinois.gov)

217 557-6498

## DIY Management

Bush honeysuckle (shown right) is easiest to identify in the fall. Cut to a stump and treat with a 20% Glyphosate solution to get rid of this pesky invasive!

Fall is also the best time to apply herbicide to cool-season grasses.

Late fall is a great time for dormant seeding of several native forbs, which are critical for wildlife habitat and food.

Disking in the fall can help stimulate the growth of forbs that are already in the seed bank.

Mowing can leave lots of thatch in fields, which can reduce spring growth and wildlife movement – consider adding prescribed fire to your management toolbox

Do you have a great photo from a trail cam or hunt on your CREP property? Let's see who has the biggest bucks, tallest turkeys and most photogenic pheasants. Email your pics to [dnr.crep@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.crep@illinois.gov)



Photo credit: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

## Seasonal Considerations

Here are some important safety tips to remember this hunting season:

- Wear blaze orange/pink
- Wear a safety harness in case of tree stand failure
- Always make sure the weapon is pointed in a safe direction

For more information, please visit IDNR's [Hunting/Trapping](#) page.



Photo credit: CRS Anne Hughes



Photo credit: CRS Jake Lux

## Can You Spot The Duck Blind?

Duck blinds are used to conceal hunters or observers while hunting ducks and shorebirds. Construction of a duck blind usually involves wood posts and planks screwed together and covered with brush.